

**North Central Region SARE Professional Development Program  
Michigan Sustainable Agriculture Plan of Work  
Calendar Year 2007  
by Dale R. Mutch**

**Section 1: Background**

The Michigan NCR-SARE PDP program is in a transition phase. Dr. Susan Smalley resigned from her PDP position and I have accepted this exciting, yet challenging position. I am following some excellent Plan of Work (POW) proposals from other states to develop Michigan's POW.

It is important to note that Michigan has been successful in receiving NCR-SARE grants in all categories such as R&E (27), PDP (14), producer (73) and the graduate student (NA) programs. We have also had good representation and commitment from individuals in Michigan for the infrastructure of NCR-SARE (Administrative Council, Technical Committee and PDP). I will present all new initiatives for 2007, and I mention this because even though we are behind currently, I believe we will catch up with our NCR colleagues quickly because of the dedicated individuals involved in our process.

**Approach for 2007**

In 2007 the Michigan focus will be on five new initiatives. We will work with various audiences but focus on Extension, NRCS and NGOs.

**Section 2: Program Logic Model**

See attached.

**Section 3: Stakeholder Involvement**

An advisory group has been identified and the members are listed in Attachment 1. The purpose of this advisory group is to advise the coordinator, participate in identifying educational program and research needs, and assist in the selection of recipients for SARE mini-grants. The advisory group will become the voice for SARE in Michigan, informing educators, etc. about SARE PDP. The current POW is based on conversations with many of the advisory group team members prior to developing this plan.

Once the Michigan POW is approved, I will plan to bring the advisory group together for a meeting at MSU, KBS or vicinity. I expect this to happen in late August or September. Michigan needs to develop a solid framework to administer this program for the future. I believe we are on the right track. The retreat for the advisory group will enhance our ability to solidify and strengthen the NCR-SARE PDP program.

**Sections 4–6 (combined): Expected Outcomes, Approach, Methods, Activities and Evaluation.**

**New Initiatives**

## **N1. Create an advisory group to evaluate and develop the activities of the Michigan SARE PDP program.**

Primary audience: Extension educators, farmers, NRCS, MDA, NGOs, etc.

Secondary audience: Agribusiness.

Initiative: A functioning advisory group will be created. A one- or two-day retreat will be held in the fall of 2007 to inform this group about NCR-SARE, the PDP program and how they can be instrumental in the development of the POW for 2008.

Justification: During the past month I have been surveying Extension educators and individuals who have received grants or been involved with SARE. Most individuals do not know what the PDP program is. The former Michigan PDP program offered support to individuals working in sustainable agriculture, but there wasn't a formalized plan. One of the goals of this proposed advisory group is to create a plan where educators, NRCS, NGOs, state agencies and farmers recognize the NCR-SARE PDP program. It will be clear how much money is available and how to apply for funding of sustainable agriculture projects. Individuals will know that evaluations and promotion of the SARE program will be part of their projects.

Short -term Outcomes: Establish an advisory group knowledgeable of SARE goals and programs. Michigan will have identified sustainable education and research initiatives. A group of advocates established promoting and managing SARE programs in Michigan. Establish the process for reviewing submissions and selecting mini-grant recipients.

Intermediate-term Outcomes: On-going and current POW for SARE programming in Michigan. Leverage SARE funding to support Michigan initiatives with outside grants. Identify and solicit 15 educators per year to submit mini-grants that will increase knowledge and foster behavior changes for 250 stakeholders throughout Michigan.

Long-term Outcomes: Measurable increase in the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices in Michigan as a result of the advisory group's activities.

Evaluation: Pre- and post-meeting evaluation instruments will be used to assess changes in knowledge and attitudes. Michigan initiatives are identified and current. Number of educators solicited and funded.

## **N2. Develop a mini-grant program for educators to use for projects in sustainable agriculture.**

Primary audience: Extension educators and specialists.

Secondary audience: Farmers.

Initiative: Deborah Cavanaugh-Grant from the University of Illinois will assist us with the application and reporting requirements. We will advertise grants up to \$1,500 to help Extension educators or specialists develop and deliver programs/demonstrations that will enhance sustainability in urban and rural communities around food and agricultural systems. Programs will be delivered to other extension educators, NGOs and governmental agencies (train the trainer). Applications and reports will be web-based and patterned after those developed by Kansas (see Attachments 2 and 3). Award recipients will be required to complete the SARE National Continuing Education Program in Sustainable Agriculture on-line course prior to distribution of the funds.

Justification: A mini-grant program was suggested to me from several educators. Budgets in the counties and the state are very tight. Mini-grants can help educators,

NRCS, governmental and non-governmental organizations develop and deliver professional development programs or demonstrations that promote sustainability of rural and urban communities. The MSU SARE PDP program is requesting to place \$10,000 for mini-grants from year August 1, 2007 to July 31, 2008. To receive these funds, applicants must submit a professional development proposal that addresses the sustainability of agriculture or their communities. These funds need to be used for their professional development and incorporated into their programs and educational activities. The expected outputs from these mini-grants include increasing awareness of educators about SARE. We hope these mini-grants can be used as leverage to gain additional support for PDP sustainable ag and farming system proposals. We expect participants to use the knowledge gained from these trainings in their programming and field work in the future. We will select a sub-committee from the advisory group to review, rank and select proposals for funding. Priority will be given to proposals that display evidence of partnering within and outside of their organizations.

Short-term Outcomes: Mini-grants will be awarded to eight educators, specialists, NRCS or MDA staff members to support Michigan SARE initiatives or until designated money is spent. They will increase their knowledge of sustainable agriculture, which will influence the future direction of their careers and programming strategies.

Intermediate-term Outcomes: Changes in attitude toward sustainable agriculture will result in inclusion of sustainable principles in a wider range of Extension and education programming. Five mini-grant recipients will leverage mini-grant funds to acquire \$100,000 in additional grant money supporting sustainable agriculture initiatives, issues and topics.

Long-term Outcomes: As sustainable agriculture professionals, educators will provide increased knowledge, awareness and adoption of practices through direct delivery to farmers.

Evaluation: Pre- and post-project surveys will be used to assess professional development and changes in knowledge and attitudes. Follow-up surveys will be used to evaluate the increase in sustainable agriculture programming and the effectiveness of the direct delivery to farmers. Baseline established from data reported in previous Michigan SARE PDP Annual Reports. As a measure of success, a minimum of \$100,000 in grant funding will be leveraged around sustainable agriculture.

### **N3. Promotion of SARE**

Primary audience: Extension educators, NRCS, farmers, interested citizens.

Initiative: The SARE coordinator will create a summary of all past funded NCR-SARE projects. Using the final reports from these grantees, we will compile reports into a notebook. These data will be used to create a poster/display for winter meetings throughout Michigan. The coordinator will develop a PowerPoint presentation that educators can use to promote SARE at field days and workshops. We will encourage mini-grant recipients to use this PowerPoint in their programming. A short DVD will be produced to promote SARE by interviewing past grant recipients—both farmer and researcher—and how SARE monies were used to help sustainable agriculture.

Justification: Michigan has been very successful in receiving NCR-SARE funds in the R&E, producer and PDP programs. However, when I visit with educators, MDA employees and NRCS staff members, no one seems to know about the program. I

would like to develop a short PowerPoint presentation, poster display and quarterly electronic newsletter to MSUE educators, specialists, NRCS, MDA, farmer groups and individuals. I considered a web page, but feel it is too costly and may not be the right time for its development. We will link the NCR SARE web page to the MSU cover crop web page with links to other states.

Short-term Outcomes: 15 educators, specialists, NRCS and MDA staff members will use SARE information during presentations and workshops or field days.

Intermediate-term Outcomes: 250 people will increase their knowledge about SARE and sustainable agriculture.

Long-term Outcomes: 33 percent of the MSU agricultural educators will be able to communicate to their stakeholders about the PDP program of SARE.

Evaluation: Notebook compiled. Poster, DVD and PowerPoint presentations are produced. Number of DVDs and presentations distributed to educators. Meetings, workshops and field days attendance measured. Educators will be surveyed to assess their communication of SARE information.

#### **N4. Bioenergy PDP workshops**

Primary audience: Extension educators, NRCS.

Initiative: A program will be developed partnering with the Field Crop Area of Expertise (AoE) to help educators adjust to the changing landscape for bioenergy farming. We will develop a program that will address county research/demonstration projects, how to work with farmers and colleagues to adjust to these changes, and help farmers visualize what the landscape could look like in the future. An important feature of this initiative is to reinforce the sustainability of the landscape from these changes.

Justification: Bioenergy is a hot and growing topic in Michigan and throughout the U.S. The Michigan PDP program wants to be a leader in supporting an NCR-SARE position paper around bioenergy. We plan to work closely with the MSU Extension Field Crop AoE Team to develop training sessions to assure these proposed systems are environmentally friendly. We will:

- Work with the AoE team to develop the program. By involving the team at the start, we will gain more support down the road. Team members (specialists and educators) will develop the agenda.
- Conduct two regional meetings in Michigan sponsored by NCR-SARE PDP program.
- Use these meetings to stimulate farmers to submit producer grants around their ideas.

Short-term Outcomes: 20 educators and specialists will increase their knowledge about bioenergy and the importance of sustainable farming systems.

Intermediate-term Outcomes: Ten educators will deliver programs to 125 farmers promoting the importance of developing a sustainable bioenergy system.

Long-term Outcomes: 20 farmers will adopt the Field Crop AoE/NCR-SARE PDP program practices.

Evaluation: Pre- and post-evaluations will be used to assess attitudinal changes from the program. A process will be developed in collaboration with educators consolidating program surveys to assess farmer behavior changes and adoptions rates.

## **N5. Travel fund for sustainable agriculture events and conferences**

Primary audience: Educators, NRCS, NGOs.

Secondary audience: Agribusiness.

Initiative: A travel fund will be established for MSU Extension educators and specialists to assist them to present at or attend sustainable agriculture conferences or meetings. A subcommittee from the advisory group will approve travel requests when submitted. When applicants are approved for travel money, they will receive an educational packet about the PDP program. A brochure and a PowerPoint slide show will be emailed to them with a copy of the most recent e-newsletter. Support for travel will be limited to \$500. Individuals may also use these travel funds to bring sustainable ag professionals to Michigan for programs around sustainable issues. Award recipients will be required to complete the SARE National Continuing Education Program in Sustainable Agriculture on-line course prior to distribution of the funds.

Justification: One of the best ways to expand the knowledge base in sustainable ag is to support travel to sustainable ag functions and conferences. In Michigan we want to provide support for our primary audience to attend and participate in field days, workshops and conferences. For example, we want a good Michigan showing at the National SARE Conference in March 2008.

Short Term Outcomes: Eight individuals will use these funds for travel to or from Michigan for sustainable ag programs.

Intermediate Term Outcomes: The NCR-SARE PDP program will support individuals who work in sustainable agriculture.

Long Term Outcomes: This support will allow MSU educators and specialists to increase knowledge of more than 250 stakeholders in sustainable agriculture practices.

Evaluation: Recipients will be required to complete a report upon completion of their travel detailing how the conference or meeting contributed to their professional development in sustainable agriculture.

### **Other significant PDP activities**

- Promote and support workshops for producer grant proposals.
- Promote and support R&E grant proposals, review and comment individually.
- Promote PDP competitive and graduate student grant programs.
- Write quarterly newsletter.
- Attend PDP functions with NCR-SARE.
- Support and promote National SARE Conference.

Attachment 1: Advisory Group/Stakeholder Group Membership and Tentative Schedule of Meetings

<b>Member name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Region</b>
Dean Krauskopf	MSUE	Southeast
Dan Rossman	MSUE	Central
Jim Bingen	MSU and MOFFA (NGO)	Central
Robin Rosenbaum	MDA	Central
Natalie Rector	MSUE	Southwest
Gary Manley	Ag consultant/farmer	Southwest
Larry Leach	CSA and farmer	Southwest
Hannah Stevens	MSUE	Southeast
Betsy Dierberger	NRCS	Central
John Simmons	Organic farmer	East
Jim Koan	AC member	East
Elaine Brown	MIFS (NGO)	Central
Mark Seamon	MSUE	North
Susan Smalley (Past Coordinator)	MSUE	Campus

<b>Purpose of Meeting</b>	<b>Tentative Date</b>
Advisory group meeting to review purpose, organization, and roles and plan future direction and activities.	Late August or early September 2007.

# Attachment 2: Mini-Grant Application Page 1



## North Central Region SARE Professional Development Program

Mini-Grant Application

### Project Information

Project Title:

Project Leader:  Phone:  E-mail:

Address:  City:  State:  Zip:

Partners/Collaborators:

### Mini-Grant Application Questions

1) What do you already know about this topic?

2) What do you hope to learn, specifically, from this mini-grant?

3) How will this mini grant contribute to your professional development?

- Educational programming
- Engagement (facilitate opportunities, resources and cooperation of individuals and communities)
- Information and Education Delivery (mastery of communication skills)
- Interpersonal Relations
- Leadership
- Organizational Management
- Subject Matter (knowledge, technical proficiency)
- Ability to include diverse groups in planning and program development

4) How do you plan to share this information with your audience?

- answer client questions
- develop new contacts and partners for work
- incorporate new ideas and information into regular programming
- develop special programming on this topic
- use in newsletters and/or newspaper columns/radio shows

Other:

## Attachment 2: Mini-Grant Application Page 2

Project Narrative

Project Narrative

### Budget Details

Mini-Grant Funds Requested:

Matching Funds Source:  Matching Funds Amount:

	Mini-Grant Contributions	Other Contributions
Travel	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Operating/Supplies	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Total	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Budget Narrative

Submit by Email



# Attachment 3: Mini-Grant Reporting



## North Central Region SARE Professional Development Program Mini-Grant Post-Event Survey

### Project Information

Project Title:  Date:

Project Leader:  Phone:  E-mail:

Address:  City:  State:  Zip:

Partners/Collaborators:

### Survey Questions

1) What, specifically, did you learn from this mini-grant?

2) How did this mini grant contribute to your professional development?

- Educational programming
- Engagement (facilitate opportunities, resources and cooperation of individuals and communities)
- Information and Education Delivery (mastery of communication skills)
- Interpersonal Relations
- Leadership
- Organizational Management
- Subject Matter (knowledge, technical proficiency)
- Ability to include diverse groups in planning and program development

3) How did you share this information with your audience?

- answer client questions
- develop new contacts and partners for work
- incorporate new ideas and information into regular programming
- develop special programming on this topic
- use in newsletters and/or newspaper columns/radio shows

Other:

4) With how many people in the following categories did you share this information?

Cooperative Extension Service Field Staff (Educators/Agents)	<input type="text"/>
Cooperative Extension Specialist/State Staff	<input type="text"/>
Non-Profit/Non-Governmental Organizations	<input type="text"/>
Farmers/Ranchers	<input type="text"/>
NRCS	<input type="text"/>
Other University/College	<input type="text"/>
Agriculture Consultants/For-Profit	<input type="text"/>
State/Federal/Tribal Agencies	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>

5) Please share any additional comments about your experience with this mini-grant and/or the SARE program?

## 2007 Michigan SARE Program Logic Model

Outcomes	Outputs	Activities	Inputs
<p><u>Advisory group</u>                      -Advisory group becomes aware and knowledgeable of NCR-SARE PDP program.                      -Advisory group becomes spokespeople for PDP program and sustainable agriculture.</p>	<p>-Advisory group retreat.                      -Advisory group develop and approve POW 2007 and direct 2008 process.                      -Advisory group will develop priority areas for 2008 and beyond.</p>	<p><u>Advisory group retreat</u>                      a. NCR-SARE information program                      b. Structure                      c. Opportunities                      d. New direction                      e. Review 2007 POW                      f. Develop new POW initiatives</p>	<p>-NCR SARE funds three-quarter time graduate student, fall semester                      -NCR SARE PDP coordinator time                      -Governmental agency time—MDA, NRCS                      -Secretary support—MSUE Land and Water program                      -Office space, etc.—MSU/KBS</p>
<p><u>PDP promotion</u>                      -MSUE educators and specialists, NRCS, MDA and NGOs will become aware of the SARE PDP program and Michigan's priority areas.</p>	<p>-E-newsletter (quarterly), PowerPoint presentation, poster, DVD.</p>	<p><u>Promote PDP and mini-grant programs through:</u>                      -PDP e-newsletter                      -Internal MSUE workshops                      -Partners workshops                      -New educators training programs</p>	
<p><u>Mini-grants</u>                      -Five MSUE educators will use mini-grants to demonstrate sustainable farming practices on farm.                      -New knowledge of sustainable practices will be used by educators to impact farmers' and consumers' attitudes.                      -The opportunity to travel to sustainable ag conferences will engage four educators to apply for mini-grants and to work with sustainable farming systems in their area.</p>	<p>-Eight MSUE and other agencies will apply for and receive funding from mini-grants to promote SARE PDP.                      -Eight educators and non-profits will use travel money to participate or present sustainable ag information.</p>	<p>-Develop PowerPoint poster, e-newsletter, DVD about SARE program.</p>	<p>Subcommittee of advisory group to review mini-grants.</p>

## 2007 Michigan SARE Program Logic Model

<p><u>Bioenergy</u>                  -20 MSUE educators from the Field Crop AoE team increase their knowledge about sustaining our lands from the PDP bioenergy initiative.                  -Ten educators will deliver programs to 125 farmers promoting the importance of protecting the land, water and air around these bioenergy systems.                  -20 farmers will adopt the workshop practices on their farms.</p>	<p>-Eight producer grants will be written about bioenergy in 2008.                  -150 people will attend the two workshops.                  -Subcommittee of the MSU Field Crop AoE will focus on bioenergy and the sustainability of these practices.</p>	<p>-Two regional meetings will be held in Michigan listing MSU AoE field crop agenda.                  -SARE PDP coordinator will work with AoE team to develop agenda and workshop.</p>	<p>AoE funds.</p>
<p><u>Travel fund</u>                  -Increased knowledge of sustainable practices will be gained by six MSUE, NRCS, MDA or NGOs who travel to or present at a sustainable ag conference.</p>	<p>-Six supported travel fund participants will discuss or present about SARE and sustainable systems to 100 other individuals.</p>	<p>-Workshops, professional conferences, field days, farm tours, etc.</p>	<p>-County or university support for above \$500 stipend.</p>